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ABSTRACT

Intended for teachers, administrators, members of school district governing boards, and concerned others, this model curriculum guide was developed to reflect the strongest possible professional consensus about the English-language arts content that every student in the State of California should be exposed to before graduating from high school. The guide was revised on the basis of reactions to the original 1985 publication. The guide is divided into five chapters: (1) Introduction; (2) Establishing a Literature-based Program; (3) Integrating Instruction: From Thought to Language to Expression; (4) Integrating Instruction in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing; and (5) Varying Students' Language Arts Experiences. (MG)

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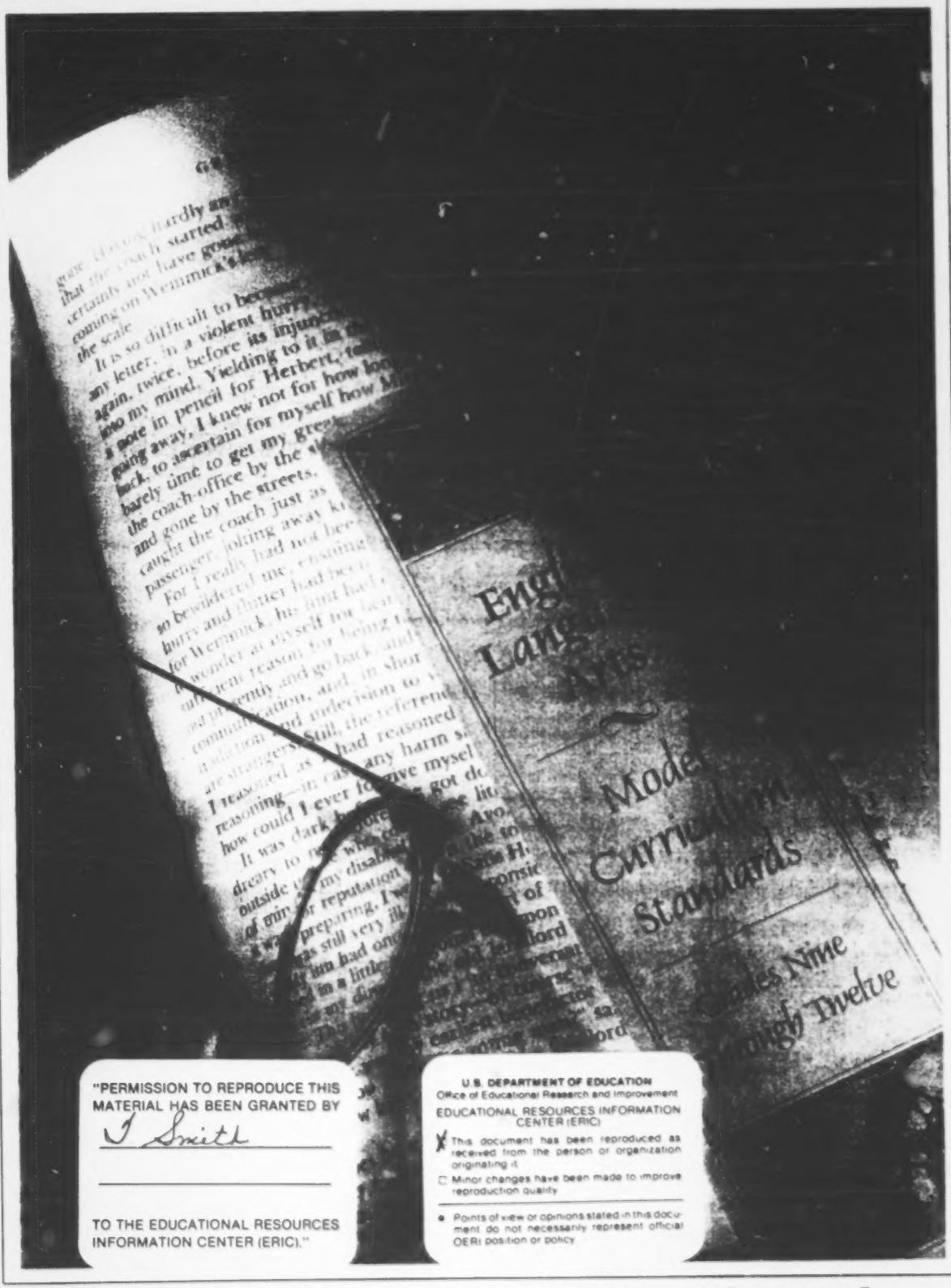


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# English-Language Arts

## Model Curriculum Standards
## Grades Nine Through Twelve

Second Edition

*Adopted by the*
CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Published by the*
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SACRAMENTO • 1991

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The document was prepared by the Department of Education's Language Arts and Foreign Languages Unit, working with two advisory committees (see Acknowledgments). The document was edited for publication by Mirko Strazicich of the Bureau of Publications, working cooperatively with George Nemetz of the Language Arts and Foreign Languages Unit and with the assistance of Theodore R. Smith, Editor in Chief. It was prepared for photo-offset production by the staff of the Bureau of Publications, with artwork and layout by Paul Lee and Cheryl Shawver McDonald. The photographer was Adam Jahiel.

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# Foreword

N January, 1985, the California State Board of Education adopted the first edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards: Grades Nine Through Twelve*, which had been developed at the direction of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Standards were also developed and adopted for five other subject areas: foreign language, history–social science, mathematics, science, and visual and performing arts; however, second editions for these subject areas have not yet been developed. Standards have also been developed for physical education and are now available. School districts are required to compare their local curriculum to the model standards at least once every three years.

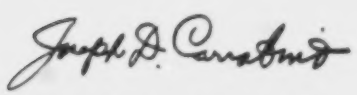
The model curriculum standards that the State Superintendent asked the Board of 1985 and the current State Board to adopt reflect the strongest possible professional consensus about the content that every student should be exposed to before graduating from high school. Some school districts will find that their programs are already consistent with the standards; others will set them as a goal to strive toward. Whatever the results of each district's curriculum review, we hope that the standards will be of help as teachers, administrators, members of school district governing boards, and others concerned with the schools work to build a stronger, richer curriculum for all our students.

We are pleased to present this second edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards: Grades Nine Through Twelve*, which was revised on the basis of reactions to the original publication. In this edition the 25 standards are largely the same as they were in the first edition. The most significant change in the second edition is in the text that follows each standard. In place of the brief but numerous "Representative Activities" is an elaboration of the standard followed by a few detailed representative activities that show how the standard might be implemented in the classroom. The purpose of these modifications has been to make more concrete the meaning of each standard without unduly increasing the length of the document.

We have learned that the first edition has had significant impact on educators at the local level. Our hope is that the second edition will

maintain this impact and that the changes made in it will help to alleviate any misunderstandings readers may have had regarding intended meanings in the first edition.

For their roles in developing this publication, we extend our sincere appreciation to the advisory committee members who prepared the first edition, the committee appointed by the California Association of Teachers of English that helped to prepare this second edition, the chief writers for the committees, and the California Department of Education's staff members who assisted with and coordinated the entire effort. The names of all of the contributors to the development of these standards appear in the Acknowledgments beginning on page ix. Our hope is that their work will be of ultimate benefit to the students of this state.



*Joseph D. Carrabino, President of the State Board of Education*
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*Bill Honig, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board*

# Preface

N 1983 the California Legislature enacted Senate Bill 813 (Chapter 498, Statutes of 1983), a far-reaching reform measure designed to improve financing, curriculum, textbooks, testing, and teacher and administrator training in the state's elementary and secondary schools. One of the central themes of SB 813 is the reestablishment of high expectations for the content that would be taught in secondary schools and for the level of effort and performance by students.

Consistent with this theme, SB 813 reinstituted statewide high school graduation requirements. Commencing with the 1988-89 school year, the requirements for graduation from high school, as described in *Education Code* Section 51225.3(a)(1), are as follows:

(A) Three courses in English.
(B) Two courses in mathematics.
(C) Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences.
(D) Three courses in social studies, including United States history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics, and a one-semester course in economics.
(E) One course in visual or performing arts or foreign language. For the purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in this subparagraph, a course in American Sign Language shall be deemed a course in foreign language.
(F) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has been exempted pursuant to the provisions of this code.

To assist school districts in the upgrading of course content, SB 813 also requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and the State Board of Education to adopt model curriculum standards for the newly mandated high school course of study. School districts are required to compare their local curriculum to the model standards at least once every three years. The full text of *Education Code* Section 51226, which requires the model curriculum standards, is as follows:

51226. (a) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall coordinate the development, on a cyclical basis, of model curriculum standards for the course of study required by Section 51225.3. The superintendent shall set forth these standards in terms of a wide range of specific competencies, including higher level skills, in each academic subject area. The superinten-

dent shall review currently available textbooks in conjunction with the curriculum standards. The superintendent shall seek the advice of classroom teachers, school administrators, parents, postsecondary educators, and representatives of business and industry in developing these curriculum standards. The superintendent shall recommend policies to the State Board of Education for consideration and adoption by the board. The State Board of Education shall adopt these policies no later than January 1, 1985. However, neither the superintendent nor the board shall adopt rules or regulations for course content or methods of instruction.

(b) Not less than every three years, the governing board of each school district shall compare local curriculum, course content, and course sequence with the standards adopted pursuant to subdivision (a).

Development of the model curriculum standards began early in 1984 when the State Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed broadly representative advisory committees in six of the mandated subject areas. (Physical education standards were developed in early 1985.) The committees worked for more than six months, frequently consulting nationally recognized experts, to produce draft standards. The draft standards were then reviewed and critiqued by teachers and administrators from more than 80 school districts throughout the state. The results of this extensive field review were used to make final refinements to the standards. These standards in English–language arts were part of the first edition.

In recognition that this was California's first effort to prepare model curriculum standards, the standards were published in a first edition to allow for revisions, where appropriate, as they were reviewed further and used by school district personnel. This second edition is the outgrowth of that effort.

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# Acknowledgments

To prepare this second edition of these model curriculum standards, the California Department of Education received the assistance of the California Association of Teachers of English. The leaders of the association appointed a committee of 12 members, who began working in late 1987. The principal writer for the group, Mary Lee Glass Templeton, completed her work on the manuscript in 1989. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig and his staff are most grateful for the assistance provided by the California Association of Teachers of English and the advisory committee appointed by the leaders of the association.

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The California Department of Education's staff support for this effort was provided by the following members of the Language Arts

*Cochairpersons of the advisory committee.

and Foreign Languages Unit: Eugene Bradford, Consultant; Mac Gundlach, Consultant; Shirley Hazlett, Manager; Diane Levin, Consultant; and George Nemetz, Consultant. Mr. Nemetz was the coordinator for the preparation and publication of the second edition of these model curriculum standards.

The first edition of these model curriculum standards for English–language arts was prepared in 1984-85 with the help of an advisory committee composed of educators and representatives of the community at large, business, and industry. The members of the committee served in an advisory role in the preparation of that document.

State Superintendent Bill Honig and the members of his staff are grateful for the contributions of the advisory committee's members and educators who reviewed earlier drafts. Members of the advisory committee and the positions they held during the time they served on the committee are presented here.

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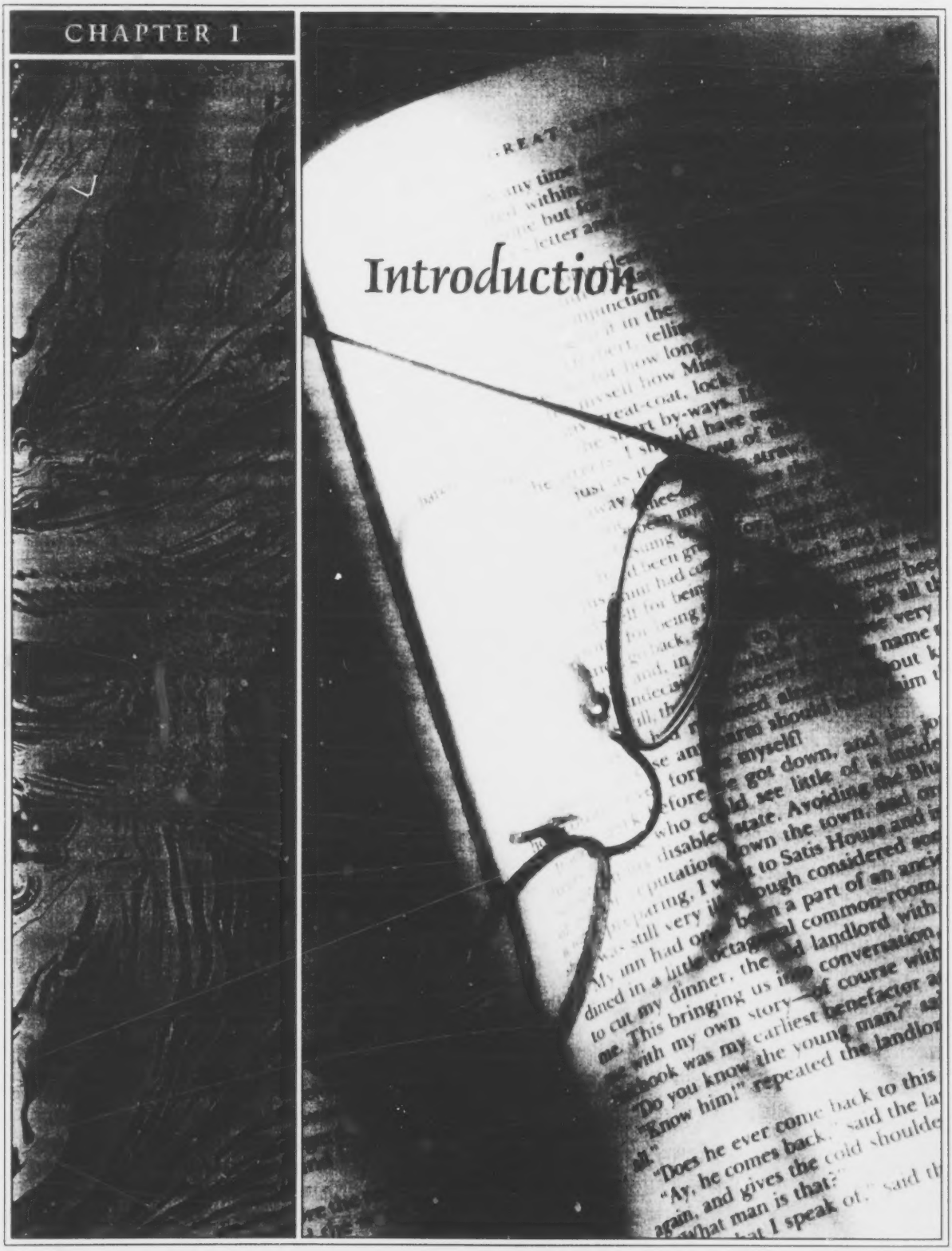
**Principal writer for the subcommittee.

CHAPTER 1



# Introduction

INCE the publication of the first edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards: Grades Nine Through Twelve* in 1985, school districts across the state have made great progress in revising the English–language arts curricula. The districts have been working hard to improve instruction in the listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking skills so that California's students will become thoughtful, functioning members of society. Even as that first edition was being distributed, work was continuing on other documents that focus on the philosophy and the more practical recommendations for improving English–language arts programs.

As the new *English–Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* and the handbooks for planning literature and writing programs were being distributed, along with the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards*, it became clear that implementing district programs aligned with such recommendations was a complex, continual process. Defining the philosophy and content fundamental to the sound preparation of students in English–language arts and suitable to the needs of their individual communities and the changing California school populations was a challenging task for school districts.

In 1987 the first major revision of the state's *English–Language Arts Framework* in a decade stated that the fundamental goals of a strong English–language arts program are to prepare students to:

- Function as informed and effective citizens in our democratic society.
- Function effectively in the world of work.
- Realize personal fulfillment.

In developing English–language arts programs, school districts have a variety of resources published by the state. Among these are:

- *Celebrating the National Reading Initiative*
- *The Changing Language Arts Curriculum: A Booklet for Parents* (in English and Spanish)
- *Effective Language Arts Programs for Chapter 1 and Migrant Education Students*
- *English–Language Arts Framework*
- *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*
- *Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program*
- *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program*
- *Practical Ideas for Teaching Writing as a Process*
- *Recommended Literature: Grades Nine Through Twelve*
- *Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*

These publications contain specific suggestions for content and teaching strategies that will address the needs of all students. This publication, however, the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards*, challenges school districts and classroom teachers to incorporate

*"We are in the midst of a revolution—a quiet, intellectual revolution spinning out dramatic insights into how the brain works, how we acquire language, and how we construct meaning in our lives. Psycholinguistics, language acquisition theory, and research in composition and literacy unite to present new challenges for students and teachers of English–language arts and to suggest the need for a fresh look at literature, the core of the discipline, and at strategies for teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 1

into program planning the knowledge they have of their schools and students and their expertise in programs and curricula suited to those students and the needs of the community.

The purpose of this second edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards* is to suggest how all of the publications cited are interrelated and might be useful in curriculum planning at the district, school, and classroom levels. The exemplary activities and references to the *English–Language Arts Framework* contained in the *Standards* also represent an elaboration on the original *Model Curriculum Standards* as a result of the experiences of planners and practitioners since the first edition was published. Accompanying each standard are some representative extended illustrations included under the heading "Representative Enabling Activities." These activities are designed to complement the representative activities included in the first edition of the *Model Curriculum Standards* and to illustrate their suitability for an English–language arts curriculum that integrates all of the language arts skills of students as they study the core literature program.

Although the content of the *Model Curriculum Standards* remains unchanged, some minor changes in the wording of the *Standards* have been made in this second edition. These changes reflect the language of the more recently published *English–Language Arts Framework*. For example, references to *core literature* refer to the same works as *central readings* simply to make the terminology of the documents consistent. In addition, in accordance with recent research in language acquisition, the language skills listed in this document appear in the order of their usual acquisition—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—as they do in the framework. Finally, the language used in this second edition reflects recent studies suggesting the importance of teaching thinking skills, rather than presuming that students will learn how to think automatically.

Along with the other publications, this second edition offers only representative enabling activities as examples, since local curriculum planners know best what will help them accomplish the goals they determine to meet. However, this document, as well as the documents previously listed, encompass basic ideas reflected in the continuing work of committees charged with revisions of English–language arts programs. These include the following:

- An effective English–language arts program is based on a district-devised literature program of core, extended, and recreational works designed to take all students, whatever their background and preparation, into the words and ideas of the great writers and thinkers, through those great works that re-create the human condition, and beyond the works into their own everyday experience.
- In an effective English–language arts program, all students are offered a program of language experiences in which all elements of language—listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking—are integrated across all academic areas of their school studies.

- In an effective English–language arts program, teachers and students are provided a variety of instructional strategies and modes, from multimodal learning styles to computer-based technologies, designed to facilitate many kinds of language learning for all students.
- An effective English–language arts program incorporates diversified materials and teaching methods designed to meet the needs of students with special needs, including students who are less able or gifted, limited-English-proficient students, or students enrolled in special education programs.
- In an effective English–language arts program, a wide range of assessment tools are used in a variety of formal and informal ways to assess students' learning in the language arts skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Such assessment is based on performance.
- An effective English–language arts program receives support from parents and members of the community, libraries and teacher-preparation institutions, as well as teachers, administrators, and school board members. That support indicates to students the importance of using effective language and underscores the goals of the program.

In addition, this edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards* elaborates on several emphases that curriculum planners and school district personnel have identified for continuing work as districts develop and align their own curricula with the *English–Language Arts Framework* and *Model Curriculum Standards*. The emphases include the following:

- Teachers need to find ways to help students get into the core literature, work through it with understanding, and go beyond it to discover its meaning in their own experience. This requires a variety of teaching and learning strategies and succeeds most effectively when language experiences help students to integrate all their language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Curriculum planners at the local level must identify core readings and develop programs, activities, and teaching strategies that address the needs of all students, from the most able to those most at risk, all of whom are entitled to experiences with the best that literature has to offer language learners.
- The rapidly developing computer-related technologies, useful tools for learning language, must become both accessible to all students and integrated into teachers' classroom strategies, where appropriate, if students are to be prepared for the future world they will encounter, both at work and at home.

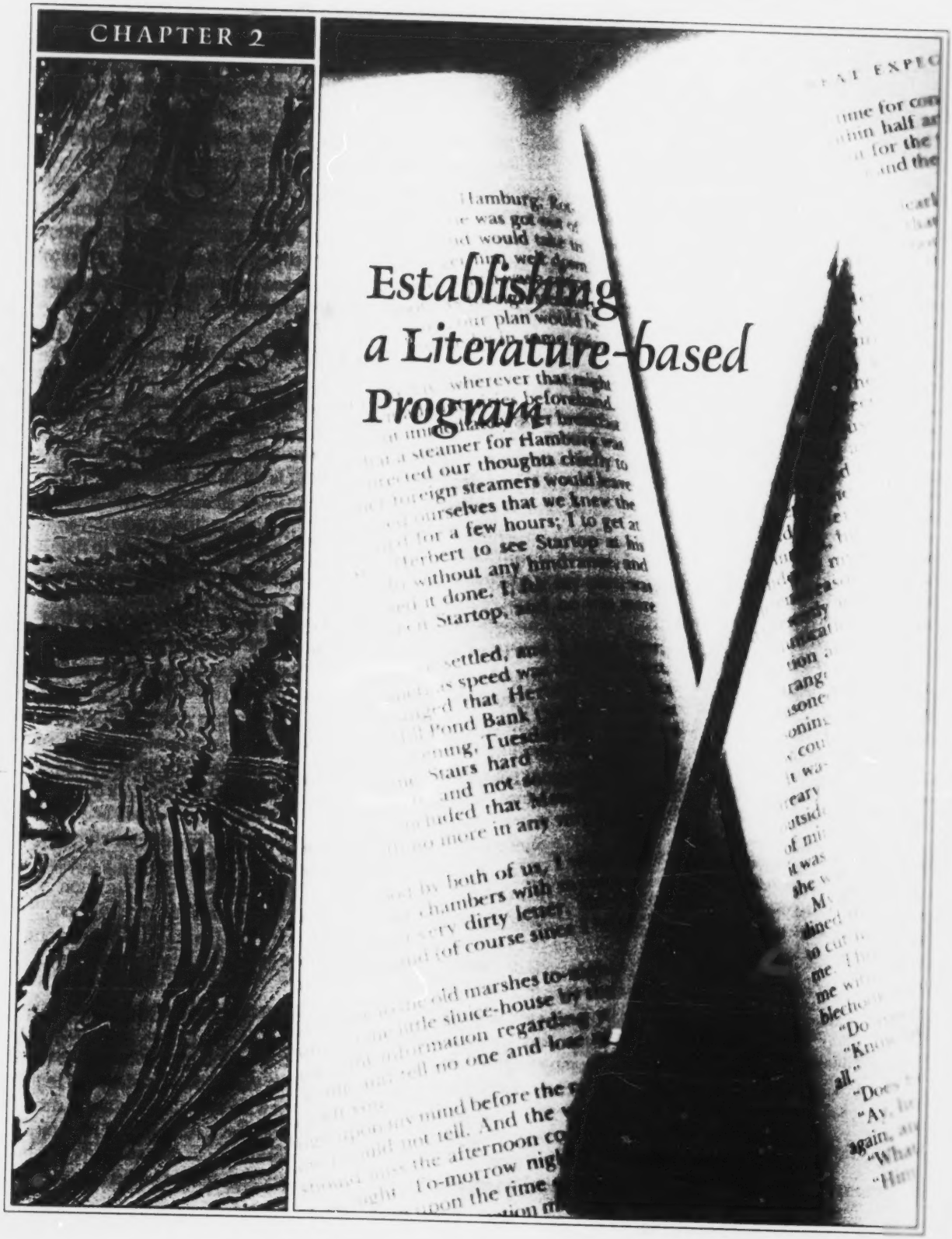
These supplementary comments about the *Model Curriculum Standards* underscore the original intent of the standards: to offer a model that is useful to school districts in developing their own strong program in English–language arts for students in the state's high schools.

Special thanks are due to the many classroom teachers whose years of teaching experience and creative approaches to dealing with students' individual and collective needs in their classrooms every day provided the expanded examples and models that appear in the sections entitled "Representative Enabling Activities." The examples are based on real classroom activities drawn from successful practitioners of the lively and challenging art and science of teaching. Thanks go, too, to the writing committee convened by the California Association of Teachers of English, whose suggestions and deliberations provided the starting point for this second edition.

Finally, four emphases from the *English–Language Arts Framework* suggest a focus for the expanded examples included in this second edition and for incorporating literature, integrated language activities, and computer-based technologies in the development of effective English–language arts programs for all students. These include:

- Establishing a literature-based program in the English–language arts
- Integrating instruction in the English–language arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Varying students' English–language arts experiences
- Assessing English–language arts instruction

CHAPTER 2



# Establishing a Literature-based Program

Societies and families alike depend on language for the record of their histories, their heroes and disasters, their beliefs, and their standards and values. From the oral tales of the Tlingit Indians in Alaska to the tribal legends of Africa, from the great myths of the Greek heroes to the tales of exploits of Chinese emperors, from the stories about Daniel Boone and Annie Oakley, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Christa McAuliffe to those about grandparents who homesteaded in Nebraska, human beings love good stories and use oral and written language to praise the best, deride the silliest, and lament the worst to their children. Surely, then, educators need to build a strong language arts program on the spoken and written records of the best in human thought and experience.

Because of the advances in publishing and technology made in the late twentieth century, so much written language is available that it must be stored on microchips rather than on library shelves. Our challenge becomes to inculcate in the young the desire to read the printed language of great literature, because it is so much easier for them to rely on electronic media than it is for them to tantalize their minds with the images and ideas that reading stimulates. While the use of such media has a place in a literature program, their overuse can lead to students becoming spectators rather than participants in the transaction between a reader and a text. School districts, curriculum planners, and classroom teachers, then, must determine how best to engage students' minds with the ideas and pleasures of literature that opens to children the past and the future, the world of here at home and across the globe, the complexities of the inner mind, and the wonders of the human heart and soul.

An effective English–language arts program provides students with opportunities to move from studies of their common cultural heritage to an exploration of their individual interests. That type of program includes core works, works assigned to all students because the works are eloquent records of society's common values and issues, and extended readings, works selected because they can satisfy the students' curiosity about ideas encountered in the core works. It should be a program that provides all students with a sense of their common cultural heritage as well as knowledge of their unique potential as drawn from a wide range of literary types and traditions. The program also includes recreational readings, works that encourage students to choose to read in their free time.

In order to prevent reading from becoming a dying art, students need to pay less attention to music videos, video games, and unchallenging television shows and pay more attention to reading. It has even been suggested that the recent decline in verbal SAT scores may in part be linked to students' indiscriminate viewing of television and videos in place of leisure-time reading. The works in a recreational reading program should be challenging and appropriate to the age of the students. When television is viewed, students should select programs

*"As we move further into an era in which far more information is available than we can absorb, where more time is spent in leisure than in work, the importance of literature in our lives increases. Literature reminds us of the best in the human character, the most admirable in human values, and the most articulate in human speech, whether those thoughts and feelings come from ancient Greece or modern Japan, from Puritan New England or tribal Africa, or from Renaissance England or contemporary Mexico."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 7

that supplement classroom and recreational reading, thus making productive use of television. For example, students might view a movie after reading the book on which the screenplay is based or watch an instructional video that is linked to a particular piece of literature.

## Developing Ethical, Aesthetic, and Cultural Values

**Standard 1** Students study the central works to develop ethical, aesthetic, and cultural values.

Because good literature speaks directly and powerfully about the human condition, all students, whatever their background, can benefit from studying their cultural heritage as reflected in the great works of literature. In fact, through reading good literature, all students often discover their common values and develop a sense of their humanness.

Those discoveries are especially important because students often are placed in educational settings that emphasize their academic or social differences. Rather than limiting some students to workbook exercises in a workbook and repetitious drills while other students experience a rich variety of reading and writing experiences, an effective English–language arts program enables students of all backgrounds and abilities to discover the excitement of connecting their own experiences with the important ideas eloquently expressed by great writers, both past and present.

*"To touch students' lives and to stimulate their minds and hearts, we need a literature-based English–language arts curriculum that engages students with the vitality of ideas and values greater than those of the marketplace or the video arcade."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 7

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 1

After students interview grandparents or elderly neighbors about the influence of family or social customs and traditions on individual values, they share with the class anecdotes that reflect the variety of family and social heritages of groups in American society today. As they read a core work such as *Farewell to Manzanar* (Jeanne W. and James D. Houston), *When the Legends Die* (Hal Borland), *China Men* (Maxine Hong Kingston), *Hunger of Memory* (Richard Rodriguez), "Grandmother" (Paula Gunn Allen), or *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (James Baldwin), small groups of students present, through role-playing dramas, puppets, or other oral or visual means, some legends or family tales implicit or stated in the literary work.

A classroom publication prepared at the end of the study of the work includes articles and illustrations about cultural or family traditions discovered by students to be influential in shaping their thinking and attitudes. In other core works students encounter ideas that are based on important ethical, aesthetic, or cultural values such as tolerance and personal integrity, the conflict between the best and worst in human nature, or the contributions of individuals or minorities to society. The titles selected for the core list, such as *The Scarlet Letter* (Nathaniel Hawthorne), *Blood Wedding* (Federico Garcia Lorca), *Of Mice and Men* (John Steinbeck), *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (Alice Walker), and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

(Zora Neale Hurston), as well as others from various genres enable all students to experience the important values shared by the human family.

## Confronting Major Social and Political Issues

**Standard 2** Students confront the major social and political issues, thus acquiring a common body of knowledge embedded in literature.

If the end of education in a democratic society is to produce thinking, literate citizens who can make intelligent, compassionate choices and lead productive, contributing lives, then one of the legitimate considerations in the study of literature is the insight the great writers give us into the major social and political issues in human experience. As students move into and through the literature, they should consider such common themes as the corrupting influence of power, the emotional and social costs of war and peace, and the struggle between conscience and social laws or mores. Such intellectual confrontations enable students to move beyond the literature and the errors of the past and into their own experiences and can result in the betterment of society.

*"If the end of English–language arts programs is developing a literate, thinking society, then surely the means to that end must be devising for students meaningful encounters with the most effective sources of human expression."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 6

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 2

The struggle for power and its effects on the heart and on society are as evident in literature, such as William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, as they are on the pages of the daily newspaper. In class students participate in a role-playing exercise in which they must plan to survive on an uninhabited island or after a catastrophic disaster such as a flood or earthquake. They are not given directions on how to proceed. Consequently, they must determine what tasks are to be accomplished, who is leader or worker, and how to be sure the work is finished. After the role-playing exercise, students write their reactions to the activity in journals and discuss their observations. They discuss their feelings about conflicts that arose from differences of opinion as well as their perceptions of their behavior and the behavior of other members of the class. As students study the novel *Lord of the Flies*, they discuss in small groups how in the novel, the boys' behavior changed as well as how the group's processes and deterioration paralleled their role-playing activity. In supplementary oral presentations to the class, students focus on current news articles that deal with the effects of power and its tendency to corrupt.

## Participating in an Extensive Reading Program

**Standard 3** Students participate in an extensive reading program supported by a large library system, including classroom, school, and community libraries. Both core works, studied in depth by all students, and "good reads," selected by students from works included on the extended reading list, make up each student's reading program.

Students are more likely to become lifetime readers if their experiences in school have been reinforced by models of lifetime reading habits and if their reading experiences have been substantive and varied. Teachers in all academic and elective departments, administrators, librarians, and parents are responsible for encouraging reading as an activity of choice, whether through support of activities such as book clubs or fairs or through regularly setting aside time at home for reading and discussions about books. Numerous suggestions for readings are readily available to teachers in lists prepared by such organizations as the American Library Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, and the Assembly on Adolescent Literature. In addition, the California Department of Education's *Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* (original or annotated editions); *Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* (Addendum); *Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program; Celebrating the National Reading Initiative;* and *Recommended Literature: Grades Nine Through Twelve* include titles of books for extended and recreational reading.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 3

Students who together have read *The Odyssey* (Homer) prepare a classroom publication about the myths associated with Greek gods or prepare oral presentations about their own original myths. Some students select additional readings, such as *Antigone* (Sophocles) or *The Birds* (Aristophanes), from an extended list of titles from Greek drama or from contemporary Greek literature in translation. Other students select readings from other ethnic or geographical mythologies, such as the tales of the Northwest Indians or of tribes in Africa. Specific titles from other ethnic groups might include *Beyond the East Wind: Legends and Folktales of Vietnam* (Jewell R. Coburn and Quyen Van Duong) and *Cuentos: Tales from the Hispanic Southwest* (José Griego). The class prepares for the school a Greek folk festival, featuring contests, games, dances, and foods. The festival, presented during the lunch period and on into the afternoon, is designed to broaden students' knowledge of and interest in other cultures and traditions.

"A literature-based English-language arts curriculum provides students three important approaches to discovering the meaning of human experience through the language of literature:

- An in-depth study of core literary works, those substantive readings which speak to important questions and values all of us in a community must address
- Reading of literature that extends the study of the core work, captures students' individual interests, and challenges them to explore new avenues on their own
- Recreational-motivational reading that is based on students' natural curiosity and that encourages them to read for pleasure."

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. "

## Selecting a Core of Literary Works for All Students

**Standard 4** Personnel in school districts select a core of literary works for all students to encounter. Together, students study some works in depth, and they read some works on their own.

*"The core literary works identified by a school or district offer all students a common cultural background from which they can learn about their humanity, their values, and their society."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 7

In some works, experiences common to all human beings are described so eloquently that all students can benefit from reading about them. Those works are included on the core list. However, the time students have and the amount of help they need to study the core works may vary considerably. These factors usually depend on the students' language skills, abilities, or cultural backgrounds and their readiness to respond to the works. For the benefit of students who do not read well, teachers should employ methodology to ensure that these students also experience the core works. A program that engages students in a variety of language activities that require them to listen, speak, read, write, and think is most effective in helping students to benefit from experiencing core works.

The range of classic and contemporary titles selected by the district to be included on the core list should reflect a variety of factors, including the range of academic abilities and the language and experiential backgrounds of the students. If the curriculum is to offer students the most meaningful learning experiences as well as opportunities to increase their language skills, discussions about titles to include on the core list must occur at the department, school, and district levels. These discussions must involve representatives of all persons involved in schooling: classroom teachers, library/media teachers, students, parents, and school administrators.

Given the possible differences in opinion between practicing classroom teachers, curriculum planners, and others about the selections for the core program, discussions must provide opportunities for all persons concerned with planning English–language arts programs to participate. Resources such as the California Department of Education's *Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight; English-Language Arts Framework; Recommended Literature: Grades Nine Through Twelve;* and the various handbooks for planning reading and writing programs include suggestions for content, teaching strategies, modes of learning, and activities. However, the most effective program will come about through the experience, expertise, and concern of teachers who care about language and use their skills to help students become thoughtful, caring, and productive members of society.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 4

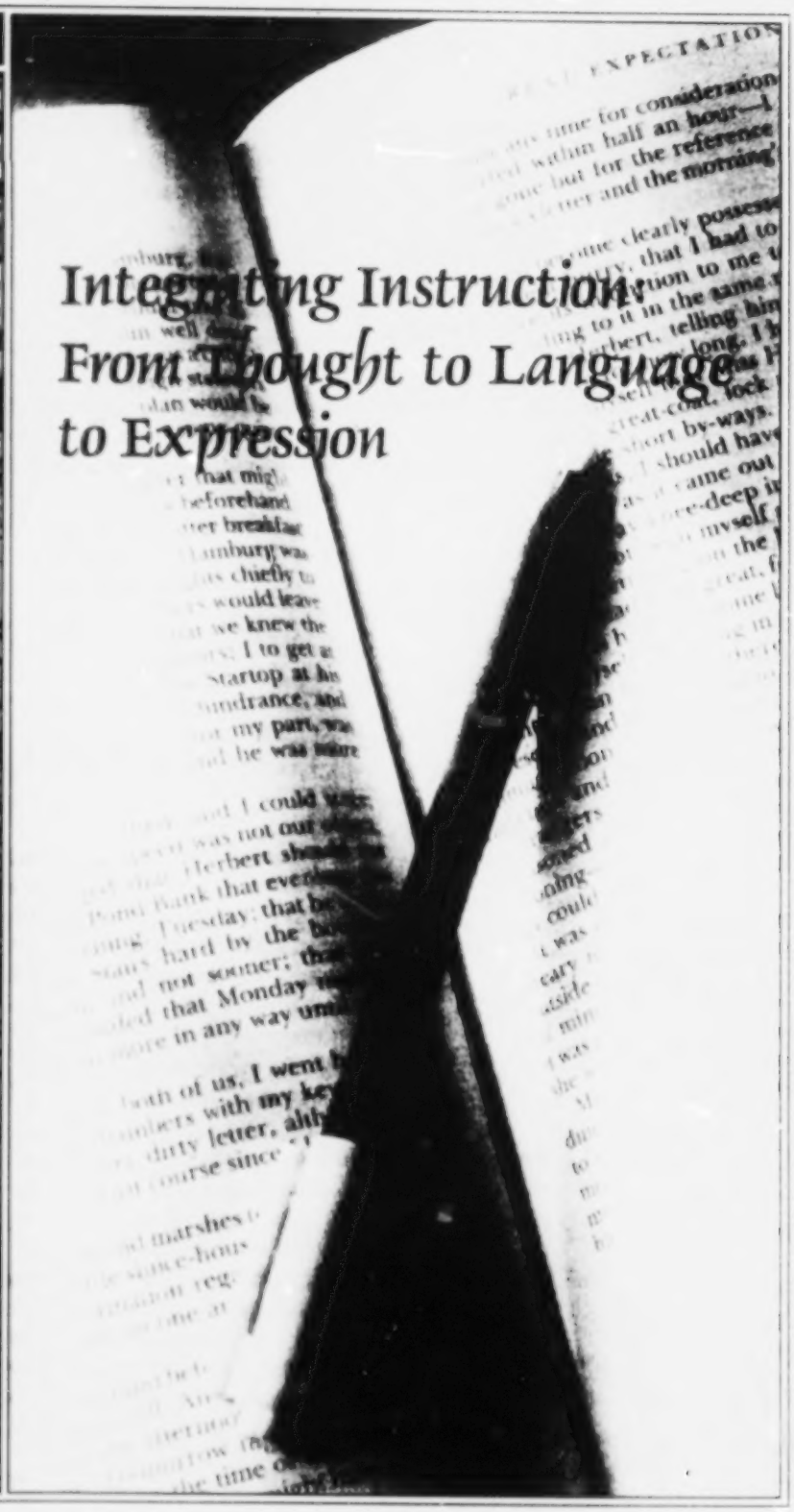
Students about to begin an in-depth study of a contemporary classic on the core list, such as Lorraine Hansberry's *Raisin in the Sun* or Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, engage in a free-writing

activity about a personal experience with children who were cruel to someone who was different or a personal experience with people who treated them differently because of their race or gender. The students share with the class or with a small group of students the insights and personal reminiscences included in their writing.

In today's ethnically diverse and changing school environment, small groups of students develop research questions to ask various cliques and ethnic groups on campus. The questions are designed to elicit information about students' awareness of isolation among ethnic groups or mainstreamed handicapped students. Students report their findings to the class. During this activity, students also study closely the plot, point of view, characters, motifs, and themes of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Students select, according to their interests and abilities, other titles of works concerned with the emotional and social effects and costs of prejudice. The titles appear on a supplementary list and include works such as *The Color Purple* (Alice Walker), *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (Maya Angelou), "The Lottery" (Shirley Jackson), *Zoot Suit* (Luis Valdez), and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Mark Twain). After students complete their reading, they present to the class panel discussions, question-and-answer sessions, or videotaped interviews with literary characters from their reading. All activities are designed to interest other students in the class to read the works. A culminating experience may be one in which students view a film of the books that they read, such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and, perhaps, write a personal or critical response to both the core work and the film.

CHAPTER 3

# Integrating Instruction: From Thought to Language to Expression



s suggested in the first edition of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Standards* and in the expanded illustrations in this second edition, the most meaningful learning occurs when students have many opportunities to talk and listen and think and write about literature and ideas and then connect their ideas to their own experiences. The English–language arts classroom, then, becomes an active place where students are interacting with each other and with the teacher as well as with the subject matter. Activities that draw on all the students' language skills are appropriate for any literary content, including novels, short stories, essays, poetry, or drama. Whether students are working with partners on an oral presentation for the class or reading first drafts of their writing to small groups of peer coaches, students practice all their language skills to articulate and shape their thinking more carefully, to sharpen their listening, to speak more precisely and forcefully, to read more perceptively, and to become more confident and fluent in their writing.

## Reading Core Works in Depth

**Standard 5** To ensure thorough comprehension, students read the core works in depth.

*"If the gold is hard to mine, it is no less there. Some books, such as those with interesting and predictable language and story patterns, hook readers instantly. . . . With other books, though, students need help to get into and through the work, focus on central issues, interpret symbols, discuss meaning, and argue interpretations."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 17

To help students understand the core literature and to move from the meaning of the text to a meaningful connection between the text and students' experiences, teachers plan a series of language activities that will enable students to move into a text with confidence, through it with comprehension of both the ideas and the important literary elements of the work, and beyond it with a sense that the ideas have value in helping them understand their own experiences in daily life. Activities that help students understand the social or cultural background of the work, the literary point of view, or the writer's style help students to begin a work with confidence and enthusiasm. Those factors are important if students are to have a successful experience with literature. Opportunities to think, write, and talk with classmates about the content and ideas of the work they are reading help students to understand what they read and what the author meant.

Summary activities and suggestions for additional supplementary reading help students to explore their own interests and see how their lives relate to the words and works of noted authors. Perhaps most importantly, a careful structuring of activities to help students into, through, and beyond the core works presents opportunities for helping them develop, through their reading, writing, and discussion, such higher-order thinking skills as analysis, synthesis, inference, and evaluation. More specific suggestions for planning a literature program to help students move into, through, and beyond the literature

they read are included in the Department's *Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program*. A wide variety of appropriate titles are included in *Recommended Literature: Grades Nine Through Twelve* and *Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*. These publications are available from the California Department of Education.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 5**

After students read together a recent magazine or newspaper article about such matters as the latest self-made millionaire or the latest public figure's embarrassed confession of moral failing, they discuss their concept of how individuals develop the values that guide their behavior. Students list the sources of their values in journals, and a class secretary records the collective efforts. They then begin reading *The Great Gatsby* (F. Scott Fitzgerald). In small cooperative learning groups, the students prepare class presentations on the 1920s, using videotapes, role playing, or panel discussions.

The presentations are designed to encourage class discussions about social customs, moral values, music and dance, money, or changes in the role of women. The students then record in a double-entry journal short passages and individual responses about how the attitudes toward money, possessions, ambition, or personal worth reflected in *The Great Gatsby* seem contemporary or limited to the period in which the novel is set. In other journal entries students explore ways in which the text suggests the conflict between the narrator's sense of integrity and the laissez-faire attitudes of the wealthy or how Gatsby's dream and the way he lives differ.

After direct instruction in higher-level thinking skills (analysis or interpretation, for example), students study a poem such as Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Richard Cory" or T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men." Students discuss Robinson's observation about deceptive appearances as reflected in his poem or Eliot's observations about the fear and impotence of those lacking a spiritual vision as reflected in "The Hollow Men." They might study pertinent works in other genres, such as the short story "Under the Lion's Paw" (Hamlin Garland) or the plays *Death of a Salesman* (Arthur Miller) and *The Little Foxes* (Lillian Hellman). After students read *The Great Gatsby*, they view a film, such as *Breaking Away*, that is based on the same theme; that is, a young man denies his working-class origins in an attempt to better himself and win the girl of his dreams. They then compare the film with the novel. Students also may participate in a summary discussion or writing assignment in which they consider the protagonists' and their own pursuit of the American dream and their potential for success or failure.

*"As the human mind seeks unity among the parts for a wholeness of understanding, so do the English–language arts require integrating all the elements of language before students can make sense of the processes of thinking, listening, speaking, reading, and writing."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 6

## Comprehending in Depth and with Sophistication

**Standard 6** Students learn to comprehend in depth and with sophistication the nuances as well as the larger meaning of a variety of works.

One of the greatest challenges of teaching English–language arts lies in the wide range of students' levels of preparation and abilities in language use. While a workbook exercise in which language learning is fragmented into identifiable but not always significant parts may keep students quiet, it does not enable all students, from the most to the least able, to develop the higher-level thinking skills necessary to participate fully in society. The most successful language arts programs provide activities and opportunities that mentally challenge every student, from the most able to those with special needs.

*"When the study of a work is followed by written and oral activities that allow students to pull their thoughts together, reflect on how the work relates to them and to their society, discuss or dramatize, and write or think, students are able to go beyond the encounter with a work and grasp what it means."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 17

What students bring to the text significantly influences what they take from it. Teachers first assess students' knowledge of and experiences with the central issues of a text as well as their language skills and abilities. Then, teachers plan appropriate activities designed to provide background information, stimulate discussions, and motivate students. The activities are appropriate for the range of learning styles among students and help to establish a climate in which all students are encouraged to learn and develop a sense that their ideas and interests are important. More able students are challenged to read and discuss supplementary titles and report their findings to the class. Students with limited-language proficiency or other special needs might be introduced to the core text through a dramatic presentation or videotape. Later, the students may read the core work aloud (alone or in concert with an audiotape) to improve their fluency. Whatever their prior experience with language has been, all students have opportunities to study the core works and explore a variety of levels of meaning and interpretation regarding them. Students explore literary elements such as characterization, conflict, theme, or style and use their thinking skills to compare and contrast, analyze and synthesize, as well as summarize and draw conclusions about the works.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 6

Choosing a classic work from the core list, such as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the teacher develops a variety of activities, keeping in mind the diverse language abilities of students in the class. Some small groups of students memorize and perform scenes for the class. During this time they also are reading the play and critical essays about tragedies. Other small groups of students, familiar with Franco Zeffirelli's classic film *Romeo and Juliet*, work with the rest of the class to rewrite scenes in rap rhythms or modern slang. The scenes are then presented to the class. Individual free-writing activities or journal entries allow all students to reflect on both the text and their own

experiences with such actions as impulsive decision making or violation of social taboos.

Direct teaching, journal writing, and class discussions allow students to summarize the plot of *Romeo and Juliet*, paraphrase the language, make inferences and draw conclusions, and make judgments about the wisdom of both characters' defiance of conventional values or parental counsel. For summary activities relating to the study of theme, some students write obituaries for the *Verona Voice*, a classroom publication, while other students interview citizens of Verona for a videotaped newscast about yesterday's bloodbath in the streets. Other students participate in a panel discussion in which they compare and contrast teen suicide yesterday and today. Some students present a conversation about the Shakespearean imagery captured in Leonard Bernstein's score and Stephen Sondheim's lyrics from *West Side Story*.

## Experiencing a Variety of Literary Genres

**Standard 7** Students read and experience a variety of literary genres, including the novel, short story, poetry, drama, biography, and essay.

California's students represent a rich diversity of cultures and possess a widely varied combination of language backgrounds and abilities. Consequently, a successful English–language arts program should include a variety of literary genres, teaching modes, and classroom activities that offer all students equal opportunities for full participation and growth. Students benefit most from activities that help them develop their oral language and their reading and writing skills. Those activities encourage students to develop confidence and to express fluently their thoughts as they read the core works.

Some students respond more readily to the experience of seeing a well-made film based on a literary work. Other students may choose to read works included on a list of extended readings or to develop an original videotape or a computer game. However, such activities require students to develop their skills of thinking, organizing, and using language to read or write, to speak or listen, either individually or in a group. An English–language arts program designed to give students a broad experience with literature offers the greatest opportunity for students to make connections between what they read and how they live. Consequently, students will be better prepared to function thoughtfully and sensitively in our demanding and fast-paced society.

*"An effective English–language arts program introduces students to literature representing many perspectives, diverse styles and cultures and points of view, classic and contemporary attitudes, and a range of modes from fiction and drama through poetry and essay and speeches."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 17

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 7

Students study literary treatments of the triumph of the human spirit, even in times of great trial. Students interview parents or

grandparents whose personal experiences include enduring a time of war or economic depression. Summarizing their awareness gained from the interviews, students share with the class anecdotes about positive and negative values the adults learned from surviving such difficult times. The class reads aloud Thornton Wilder's play *The Skin of Our Teeth*. They view together a segment from the film *Gandhi* that illustrates the use of passive resistance to resolve conflict, and they contrast the view expressed in the film with the view expressed in a short work about war, such as John Hersey's *Hiroshima*.

Students' oral mini-research reports on the specifics of war and speakers from community organizations supplement the classroom readings and discussion. Also, short films, such as *Time Out of War*, based on Robert W. Chambers's short story "The Pickets," and *Coup de Grace*, based on Ambrose Bierce's short story of the same name, can reinforce their learning. They can go beyond the core readings by choosing other titles dealing with the human spirit in war and conflict. Those titles might include novels like *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Erich Remarque), *A Farewell to Arms* (Ernest Hemingway), *The Red Badge of Courage* (Stephen Crane), and *Johnny Tremain* (Esther Forbes); short stories like "The War Prayer" (Mark Twain) and "Two Soldiers" (William Faulkner); poems like "War Is Kind" (Stephen Crane) and "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" (Randall Jarrell); or a more recent work about the Vietnam War, such as *In Country* (Bobbie A. Mason); biographies like *Gandhi: Fighter Without a Sword* (Jeanette Eaton) and *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family* (Yoshiko Uchida); or a play like *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett).

In a final writing assignment, students focus on their personal insights about the human and social costs of war gained from their extended readings and oral activities.

*"Written passages are the greatest system yet devised for the storage and retrieval of information. They open to young learners the worlds of history and science, arts and vocations, psychology and philosophy, and mathematics and geography."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 11

## Learning About Other Disciplines

**Standard 8** Students learn more about the perspectives of other disciplines, such as science, history, economics, mathematics, and art, and about how their acquisition of language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing develops their ability to learn across the entire school curriculum.

Students who cannot listen accurately for directions or information, ask questions, articulate thoughts effectively, read with understanding, and write coherently cannot succeed in most activities in the school program. To separate the disciplines as disconnected entities is as foolish a practice as to isolate the skills of listening from reading and speaking from writing. Therefore, it becomes the collective responsibility of all school departments to reinforce the importance of

language skills and to provide a variety of opportunities, teaching strategies, and assignments that will help students of every background and ability to grow and learn.

Science teachers who encourage students to read literate essays, social studies teachers who frame writing assignments to encourage thought rather than plagiarism, and art teachers who reinforce historic or artistic themes with references to the language arts as well as the visual arts help students to make connections between their language arts classes and real-life experiences. By the same token, English–language arts teachers reinforce the realization that language is central to understanding in many disciplines.

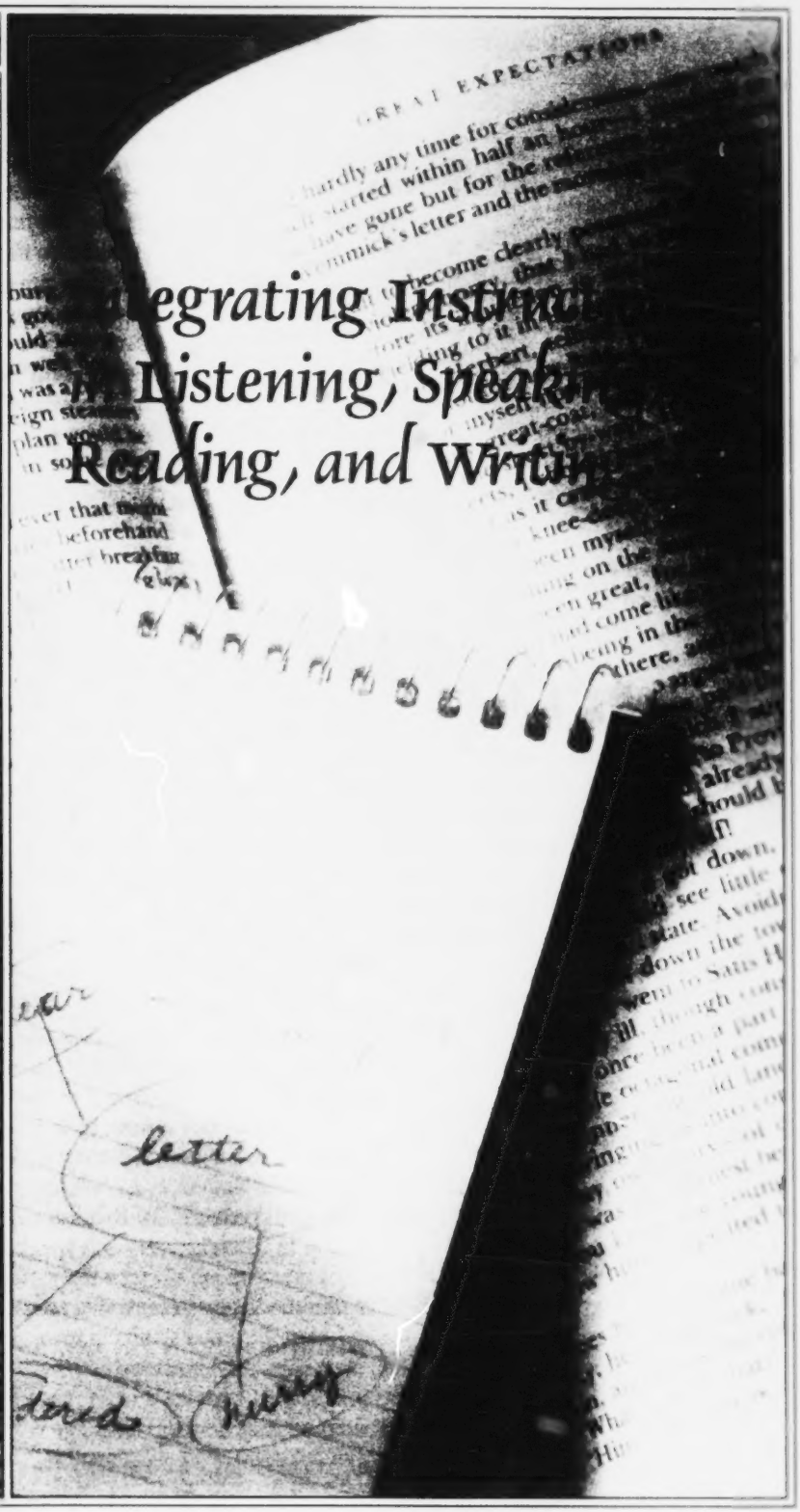
**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 8**

Students in a history class study the westward movement and select optional readings from a list of fiction and nonfiction works. The list includes titles such as Mark Twain's *Roughing It*, O.E. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth*, Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, or the diaries of members of the Donner party. In pairs or small groups, students develop oral presentations for the class, either through minidramas in which they play the role of characters from the reading or through newscasts and interviews based on the characters and situations they encountered in the reading.

While preparing a written assignment based on a diary entry of the times or a report in the local newspaper, students read drafts of their writing to small groups for suggestions for revisions. Similarly, students in a science class read titles like James Watson's *The Double Helix*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, or selected essays by Loren Eiseley. In small groups they identify and discuss important science controversies and issues of concern to society. Students prepare a news article about the discovery of the DNA molecule or an editorial about the importance of caring for the environment. In the same way, students who are studying slavery and the Civil War in their history classes might read *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (Ernest Gaines), *John Brown's Body* (Stephen Vincent Benét), or *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Harriet Beecher Stowe) in their English classes.

CHAPTER 4

# Integrating Instruction in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing



High school students and foreign language teachers who have experienced the total immersion technique of language acquisition can testify to the validity of making sense from language by using all the visual and verbal elements of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Yet all too often in students' classroom experiences, classes become larger and more ethnically diverse and teachers' energies are more fragmented or depleted by the demands and needs of media-oriented students. Accordingly, language experiences tend to be reduced to piecemeal, manageable bits. Students are not required to listen attentively to teacher and classmates, speak articulately, read thoughtfully, and write coherently. However, students who are encouraged to talk with their classmates before they write, to listen and respond to each other's ideas, to read before they write, or to write about a personal experience before they begin a core reading, become fluent in their use of language.

Effective instruction in English–language arts provides opportunities for all students, regardless of ability or language background, to feel encouraged in their efforts to learn as listening and speaking reinforce reading and writing, as thinking and writing reinforce reading, and as reading reinforces thinking and speaking. The expanded examples associated with each of the standards in this edition suggest some of the ways teachers can teach the core by integrating language activities, using a variety of teaching strategies and learning modes, and exploring the ways that the new technologies available to English–language arts programs can enhance students' learning.

*"Unlike early motor behavior, in which sitting precedes crawling and progresses sequentially to standing and walking and dancing, language use from its beginning requires a sense of wholeness and meaning, a sensitivity to the interconnectedness of parts rather than an isolation of elements and fragments."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 13

*"In-depth learning of any kind presumes various levels of effort and involvement of all the human senses and faculties. For example, when discussion precedes the reading of a selection, the reading becomes easier, and ideas become more accessible to the reader. Similarly, when discussion precedes a writing assignment, the quality of writing improves. When a writing assignment follows the reading of a selection, students remember key ideas of a story more easily, more fully, and longer."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 6

## Responding to the Core Works

**Standard 9** Students respond actively to the core works through integrated listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities.

While the graduate school teacher-preparation student might assume that soft-spoken, professorial lectures are the norm, high school students enter the language arts classroom with expectations that are quite different. If they are not specifically there to be entertained, they at least respond more readily if they are involved actively. Perhaps the most neglected language skills in recent educational eras are those of listening and speaking, for it was previously presumed that students knew how to listen actively and speak clearly. More than ever before, it becomes clear, as we observe the varied language experiences of students in today's classrooms, that students need frequent, varied experiences in listening and speaking to help them develop the more complex language capabilities related to reading and writing. The most effective programs, then, provide a wide range of oral, aural, and other verbal activities to help develop language competence.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 9**

Students who have viewed a videotape of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech write a journal entry about their vision of what a "good life" is and share ideas in a class discussion. Later in small groups, or perhaps in pairs using a computer terminal, they develop interview questions about personal visions of the "good life" to ask either a student from another culture or a parent or grandparent, who becomes the focus for an essay.

In a concluding activity, students read and study together Lorraine Hansberry's play *Raisin in the Sun*, viewing the film afterward as they study Langston Hughes's poem inscribed at the beginning of the play and other supplementary poems, short stories, or essays dealing with the American dream or another culture's visions of the human longing for dignity, security, and personal worth. These might include a poem like "Napa, California" (Ana Castillo), a short story from *Yokohama, California* (Toshio Mori), or a piece of nonfiction like *Many Smokes, Many Moons* (Jamake Highwater).

## Developing a Systematic Writing Program

**Standard 10** Districts and/or schools develop a systematic writing program.

*"English–language arts programs should help students discover what they have to say, how they can draw on their experiences and their reading to clarify their meaning, what their words say to a listener or reader, and how they can edit for clarity."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 17

Students must develop their skills and confidence as writers so that they can approach competently and independently the real-world writing tasks associated with their careers or higher academic efforts ahead of them. In the English–language arts class, they become fluent writers through frequent opportunities to write in a variety of modes, developing a sense of voice through their encounters with literature; a knowledge of the stages of the writing process through their listening to each other's drafts as they read aloud and work individually or cooperatively on revising; and an awareness of audience and purpose through their frequent practice with informal speaking and writing activities. Finally, students experience how writing can be used as a tool for learning and problem-solving in all subject areas.

Students for whom English is a second or third language develop writing skills first in their primary language and then, through continued exposure to English-speaking students, participation in oral classroom activities, and encounters with models of English prose, they apply these skills to writing in English. Again, the integration of all the language arts of listening and speaking, reading and writing, and the use of a variety of teaching strategies, learning modes, and media enable students to move from confidence to fluency and, finally, to correctness in their mastery of written language. More specific suggestions for how to integrate the language skills developed in a writing program with core literature are included in the California Department of Education's *Handbook for Planning an*

*Effective Literature Program*, the *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program*, *Practical Ideas for Teaching Writing as a Process*, and the *Writing Assessment Handbook: Grade Twelve*.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 10**

As they read Gordon Parks's *The Learning Tree* or Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, students write informally in journals several times about significant experiences, places, and people they remember as they were growing up, and they discuss with small groups or the whole class what learning occurred as a result of those experiences. Students revise one of their earlier free writings, read it in draft form to an editing group, and polish it to final draft form.

As a postwriting activity, students are organized in groups according to the nature of their final essay to prepare a class publication, collecting their efforts and distributing the product both to class members and to other audiences in the school, such as counselors, administrators, or parents.

## Learning the Writing Process

**Standard 11** All students learn that writing is a process that includes stages called prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing.

*"In their earliest encounter with writing instruction, students must develop their skills with all the stages of the writing process."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 10

Helping students to re-see and revise their writing becomes for the English–language arts teacher the major task of leading students into and through the writing process. Frequent informal practice and working with pairs or small groups focused on a specific task provide students with opportunities for constant response and informal evaluation activities that students learn to conduct themselves. As a result, students develop both a sense of the process of writing and reinforce the integration of their language skills, because listening and speaking become appropriate modes of response to a writer's efforts. Even more importantly, postwriting activities develop in the students a sense that their language empowers them to communicate with others and affect the course of events within or outside the classroom.

Perhaps in the area of writing, more than in any other element of language instruction, students with access to computers benefit greatly from the ease of composing and revising made possible by the technology available to today's English–language arts programs. Revising and editing become processes facilitated by the software. Students experience frequent opportunities for cooperative learning and talking about language as they help each other with everything from stylistic choices to organizational matters or to interpretation of a character or theme in their writing. Students who already have learned keyboarding and computer skills can compose a first draft on the word processor; respond to each other's printed drafts in small

groups or on the word processor, and revise, reorganize, insert, delete, and correct for mechanics, all with considerably more ease than ever was possible in longhand.

Experiencing the phases of the writing process offers students unique opportunities to integrate all their uses of language, oral and written, and to benefit from cooperative learning activities by discussing their early responses to a piece of literature in a prewriting activity, reading or listening to first drafts, and coaching each other in editing skills or proofreading. Moreover, the generation of writing ideas allows teachers to structure learning activities in a variety of modes, using art or music, for example, as a stimulus for writing about metaphor. Finally, students discover how writing is a tool for learning and problem solving in all subject areas. Students who speak a language other than English develop writing skills first in their own language, and then, through continued contact with English-speaking students and encounters with models of English prose, they apply these skills to writing in English. The *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program* contains more specific information about suggested activities for developing students' skills in managing the stages of the writing process.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 11**

After small-group discussions about issues they face in their lives that force them to choose between what their conscience tells them to do and what social pressure or law demands, students bring to class letters or editorials from the local or school paper to generate discussion about how language can influence action. They read Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, noting how the letter explains the rationale for civil disobedience and urges a course of action.

Later, the class reads aloud or reenacts scenes from *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail* (Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee) while able students read Henry David Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* from the extended reading list. In a final writing activity, students prepare letters to send to local or state legislators about important community issues in which they identify and explain their concern about an injustice that needs correction.

## Writing Cogent, Clear, and Concise Prose

**Standard 12** All students learn to write cogent, clear, and concise prose connected to the literary works they are studying.

Students learn to write prose of quality by using literary works as models and writing about subjects that have meaning for them. Because their classroom activities are designed to help them move into the work confidently, through the work with understanding, and

*"In effective English-language arts programs, teachers integrate writing activities with listening, speaking, and reading, and they offer students frequent practice in writing about a wide range of subjects—from their own experiences and from literature. . . ."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 10

beyond the work to the connections between literature and their own lives, students discover how each writer has presented ideas in a powerful yet accessible way. All students, from the most able to the least prepared, from native speakers to those in language minority groups, encounter models of effective prose through reading, through teacher-written or professionally written works, through daily writing and peer response, and through the support of teachers and parents. Moving from imitation of good models to their own narratives, exposition, or description, students develop a sense of the features that make all writing effective to a reader.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 12**

Students who have read aloud a play like William Gibson's *The Miracle Worker*, Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*, or Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* work in small groups to discuss and then write collaboratively a brief epilogue to the play, which they then perform for the class. They draw on their understanding of style, characters, conflicts, setting, and events in the original to create an appropriate final episode consistent with the language, tone, and theme of the original.

Following the class presentations of each epilogue, students write a brief "critic's corner" review of the productions, selecting the best or most appropriate version and developing and explaining the reasons for their selection.

## Developing Voice and Style

**Standard 13** Students write to develop their own voice and style.

*"Having developed confidence and fluency through frequent practice, having learned how to approach a variety of composing tasks from prewriting through evaluation, having discovered a sense of their own style and voice and power through writing, students can avoid plagiarism or developing a formal, phony prose that obscures meaning."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 11

Students learn to recognize voice in writing by reading various types of literature, analyzing and comparing the works to see how voice works. By identifying characteristics of different writers' styles, comparing tone and voice in two political speeches, newspaper columns, or editorial letters, for example, students experience varieties in language and develop their individual voices and writing styles. By rewriting a piece of prose buried in professional or bureaucratic jargon or imitating the style and sentence patterns of writers like Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, Eudora Welty, Ann R. Fisher, or James Baldwin, students internalize a sense of how language reflects the writer and how the writer can manipulate language to his or her own purposes. Through their encounters with a variety of practice writings, free-writing activities in journals, models of professional and student writing, and small-group and class discussions about suiting style and tone to purpose and audience, students can hear their own voices, revise their drafts with purpose, and differentiate their uses of language according to the occasion or assignment. Such writing activities prepare students to use language effectively in a career or academic setting after they leave school.

Writing activities that enable students to express themselves effectively, whatever the setting or purpose, become especially important in a time when language is shaped so often by the media, by the society's orientation to computer-like brevity and patterns of communication, and by the increasing incidence of languages other than English in students' language development. Effective writing programs must provide students with a rich diversity of practice and informal writing assignments and opportunities for peer and self-evaluation and revision, if they are to encourage students to listen for their own voices and use them effectively to influence others.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 13**

While they are reading and studying Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, with appropriate reference to *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass* for literary, social, or mathematical commentary, students work in groups of three or four to develop a "nightly news" broadcast of a segment of the work to which their group is assigned. Group and class discussions focus on the differences in tone, voice, purpose, and style of both the work and the newscast format, with appropriate discussions of parody and satire related to the work and the broadcast.

After students have written the script for some segment of the "nightly news," considering such formats as interviews, dialogues, objective reporting, and human interest features, their news program may be performed for the class live or on videotape and may include any appropriate costumes or commercials along with news, sports, human interest features, entertainment, or other appropriate media coverage.

In a final writing activity, students become media critics and review the program or write a free-speech message to the station about some important issue raised by the broadcast.

## Studying Conventions of Writing

**Standard 14** Through direct teaching, students study the conventions, such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling, when these conventions have not already been acquired through reading, writing, and using oral language.

In an English–language arts program that provides all students with integrated language arts activities derived from their study of important core works of literature, the way to teach students how to use language effectively and correctly is to immerse them in the most effective models of good language use. However, because of the diverse influences outside the classroom on students' language use, teachers sometimes must focus on teaching how to spell and punctuate correctly and how to construct sentences that say accurately what the writer or speaker intended.

*"Although frequent reading, writing, and oral activities help students develop a sense of the conventions of language use, those conventions not acquired through reading or writing can be taught directly so that they can learn necessary skills.*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 18

The addition of computer hardware and software to the tools available for teaching language has made many operations easier for students, from searching a text and revising a single word or phrase to instantaneous cutting or rearranging of passages. However, the transition from drill and practice or fill-in-the-blanks exercises is no more effective on a video screen than it is when the exercise appears in a workbook. As a result, the challenge to teachers of English–language arts is to devise effective ways to integrate a student's writing, speaking, listening, and reading with those direct instructional activities that are designed to focus on the student's mastery of conventions.

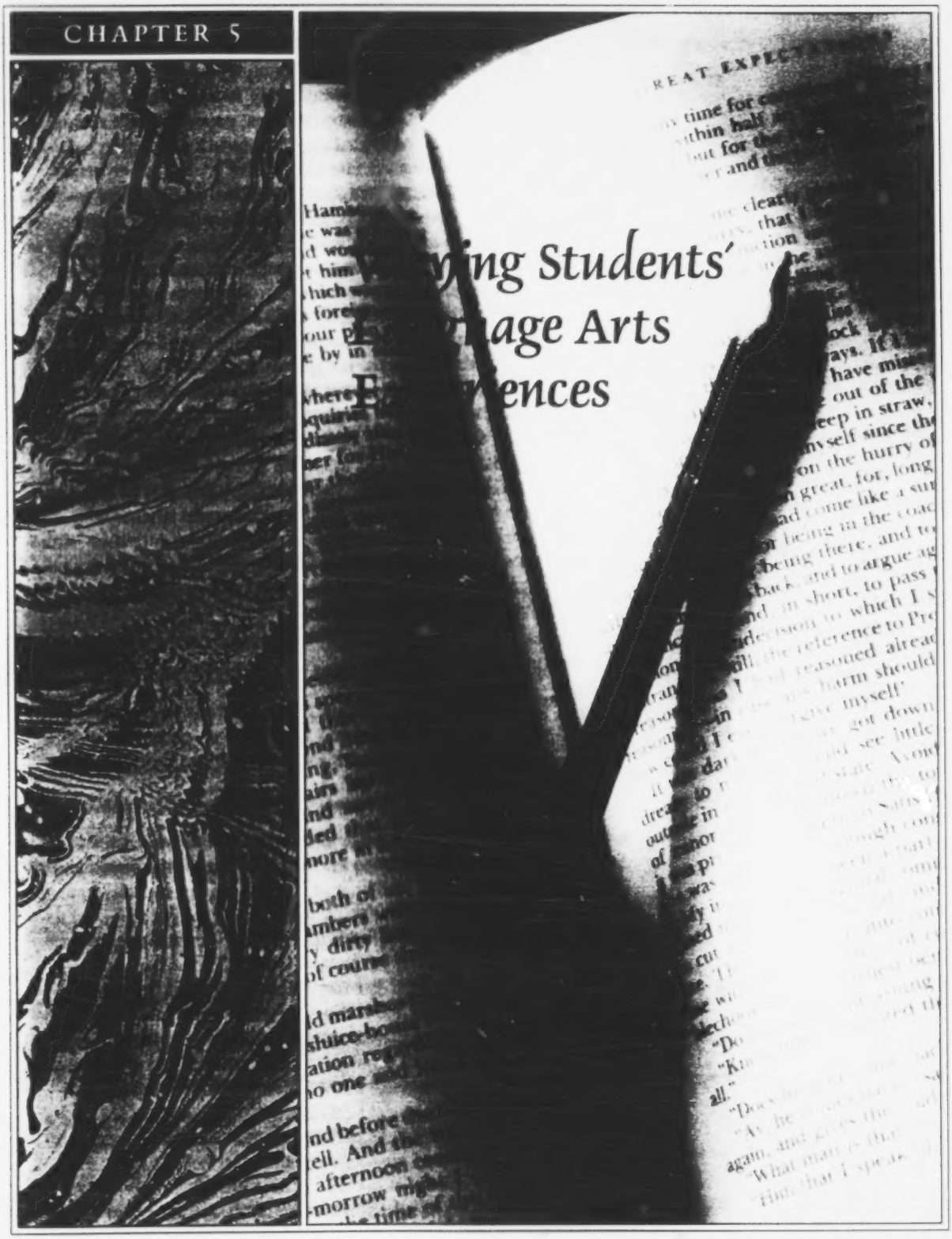
Students who become adept at editing and proofreading their own and other students' papers, and at using classroom resources such as dictionaries, style books, or grammar textbooks, develop a capacity to write confidently and clearly and to review their own writing for the correctness expected in an educated, literate society. Teaching the conventions by structuring classroom activities for cooperative learning among students in small groups or pairs with different language backgrounds enables all students to participate in the process of refining their use of language.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 14**

Before they begin the literary work, students write in their learning logs a free-writing assignment, remembering a time when they were corrected: why? how? by whom? how did it feel? In a follow-up class discussion, students and the teacher define *conventions* and consider times and places where people are expected to observe conventional behavior and why. As they read aloud and study George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, students collect from their knowledge of campus and classroom conversations written examples of students' use of multiple levels of formal and informal language. As the students record the speech they overhear, they practice correct spelling and application of punctuation rules learned in class by exchanging papers with others in small groups. Each editing group focuses on a specific convention identified by the teacher after diagnostic reading of students' papers to identify which areas need attention.

Pairs of students write and share with the class brief dialogues illustrating the association of dialect or language use with social status and influence on others, such as, for example, a student speaking to a college interviewer or prospective employer, a teacher speaking to a class whose students do not understand his or her jargon or dialect, or two students attempting to communicate when they come from different parts of the country or from different social or ethnic backgrounds. As each student develops an autobiographical statement such as those seen on college, job, or scholarship applications, small editing groups focus on the final editing task of correcting conventions before the final draft is prepared.

CHAPTER 5



# ing Students' age Arts ences

*"Teaching strategies that allow students to take active roles in their learning, share ideas with partners and groups, ask questions about what they want to know as well as about what the teacher intends, and write and discuss and make presentations for the class develop in students the skills they must take with them from school into the rest of their lives."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 14

*"With a variety of oral language experiences based on the vast resources of literature and the arts, sciences, or social sciences, students who have been involved in their own learning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing will enter a society prepared for the kind of cooperative work needed in the adult world today."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 12

Much of the emphasis in the numerous recent reports about the plight of education in the American society today focuses on the passive nature of many students' experiences in school. As the diversity of the student population has increased, class sizes have grown larger, school funding has diminished, and teachers' emotional and physical resources have been stretched to their limits. Many students, well-prepared or not, find themselves in oversized classes and consigned to work with standardized workbooks or seat exercises that consist of fragmented pieces of language experience. Such activities often are ill-suited to the students' individual needs and development in language. At the same time, researchers who study the act of learning or language development observe a wide variety in students' methods and modes of learning, some linear and others visual, some verbal and others auditory, some by imitation and others by intuition.

While the art of teaching English–language arts may seem, sometimes, as if the juggler has too many balls in the air, students who are actively engaged, whatever the activity or mode of learning, are those who learn most effectively. The classroom teacher who capitalizes on all the resources for varying classroom activities—from equipment and grouping to cooperative learning and other art forms—enables all students to come away from the experience having advanced beyond where they began.

## Participating in Oral Communication Activities

**Standard 15** Students regularly participate in oral communication activities, such as class discussions, panel presentations, and debates on worthwhile topics.

Recent research in language acquisition and the processes of learning suggests how central to students' learning is the development of effective listening and speaking skills. The human capacity to learn through listening is as old as the tradition of storytelling to record the significant events and heroic deeds of a society. Perhaps because we take listening and speaking for granted from infancy, sharpening those skills as learning tools is a task often overlooked in the classroom, because we assume that children already know how to do both. However, today's schoolchildren come to education in the language arts with a very diverse set of language backgrounds and encounters with electronic media creating a whole new pattern of responses to the speech of others.

Because language carries both the content and the processes of learning, teachers of English–language arts must help students develop oral and aural skills in order to function effectively in the worlds of learning and work. More importantly, the variety of classroom activities requires students to listen and speak, beyond reading

and writing, and demands the participation of students in the act of learning. Students who only sit and absorb often respond like parrots or sponges. Those who listen and talk learn to think and grow.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 15**

To prepare students to go into the reading of a core work with some understanding of how their experiences are connected to those of literature, after they develop individual word clusters about the word *stereotype*, the teacher asks students to share experiences in which they have encountered age-, class-, or ethnicity-related stereotypes. As the students read and study a core work, such as *The Outsiders* (S.E. Hinton), *The Grapes of Wrath* (John Steinbeck), *Selma, Lord, Selma: Girlhood Memories of the Civil-Rights Days* (Sheyann Webb and Rachel W. Nelson), or *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Alan Paton), small-group and class discussions focus on how the author raises issues of stereotypical behavior and thinking patterns.

While some groups develop class presentations of debates on a subject such as government subsidies for the homeless or segregated education, others prepare a talk show or evening news segment, with interviews of community leaders and citizens, in which students base their roles and opinions on the issues raised in the book or on a comparable current issue in the students' own community. Cooperative planning of the presentation, whatever the format, enables students to practice listening attentively, to contribute to the group's final project, and to respond to the collective needs to solve problems of timing, organization, specificity of arguments or opinions, and smoothness of the final presentation.

## Striving for High-Quality Oral Presentations

**Standard 16** Students strive for high-quality oral presentations through an awareness of standards, through class assessment, and through motivation inspired by good models.

*"More formal speeches allow students to experience the value of preparation, through interviews or reading; of practice and timing; of persuasion, through assessment of purpose and audience; and of effective use of delivery in eye contact, diction, and voice control."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 12

Especially in an era when slick, fast-paced video technology immerses students in the manipulative possibilities of language and other media, students learning to speak and listen effectively profit from classroom activities that allow them to identify the criteria for effective use of language, examine effective models of speaking and listening, and evaluate their own and their classmates' effectiveness in persuasive speaking. Videotaped discussions, speeches, or debates from both professional and student speakers provide an "instant-replay" opportunity for students to study the art of listening and speaking in more depth than was possible when students had only live speakers or audiotapes to evaluate.

Significant speaking occasions, such as a presidential debate, school assembly or election, or some other special event, become accessible to all students. Students accustomed to videotaped critiques

from coaches in their sports activities may find comparable opportunities in English classes embarrassing at first, but they soon learn to examine their own speaking, identify the criteria for effective speaking, and refine their listening with considerable skill and awareness of the elements of effective and persuasive speaking.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 16**

After viewing a videotape of John F. Kennedy's inaugural address or reading aloud Pablo Neruda's or William Faulkner's Nobel Prize acceptance speeches, students list and discuss the ideas of the speeches and the qualities that made the delivery effective. After they have viewed several videotapes of effective speeches on the subject of public service or free speech, students prepare a free-speech message about an important issue of concern to them, such as caring for school property, eliminating sports or after-school programs, requiring a school service project for graduation, or paying for school vandalism from student body funds.

Opportunities to practice their speeches before a small group allow even shy students to develop confidence at the same time as they learn to evaluate their work informally, through conversation or written "coach notes" from other students in the group. The class discussions that occur in the process of preparing speeches should identify for students the marks of effective and persuasive messages, including such factors as organization, detail, effective voice and body manner, a lively introduction, and a conclusion. During the presentation of the speeches, several students are identified as responders for each speaker, reacting with praise for effective presentations and suggested areas for growth, either on an informal written evaluation form or, if students are already confident and comfortable with evaluation, in an informal critiquing session after several students have completed their presentations.

*"The process begins with childish awe for parents and teachers and continues into adult reverence for the great people who surpass our more ordinary expectations for ourselves. . . . In addition, teachers and school officials who model good writing and speaking in their announcements, in school newspapers, or in classroom communications develop among students a respect for language and its power when used effectively."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 14

## Modeling Effective Speaking and Listening

**Standard 17** Students are supported and reinforced by the adults in their environment who model and guide effective speaking and listening skills and who exemplify proper respect for the diversity of language.

Students encounter oral language daily in their homes and classrooms, in clubs and meetings, on headsets and large-screen videos. In fact, they are often accustomed to tuning out language or sound or to doing homework while barraged with noise of one kind or another. However, their immersion in sound and media may be one important factor that accounts for their lack of listening and speaking skills. When persons delivering commercials, disc jockeys, and sports announcers fail to provide models of good language use, it is little

wonder that students arrive in the classroom with underdeveloped skills of listening attentively. Perhaps more importantly, administrators, students, and teachers in the classroom are too often part of the problem of ineffective use of the spoken language and poor listening skills.

Students themselves, sometimes masters of several spoken dialects, often socially derived, manipulate their language use daily but often without any direct instruction in those standards of good language use expected in the workplace or in academic work in disciplines other than the study of English. Besides heightening the awareness of administration and faculty in other disciplines about the importance of good models of listening and speaking skills, English–language arts teachers who provide activities that allow students to evaluate effective uses of oral language listen closely to others' dialects and develop respect for language differences. The teachers determine how and when to adapt their teaching to occasions in which their students can function effectively both in and out of school in the varied processes of communication demanded in daily life.

**Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 17**

Students who have read aloud a play like J.M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* or have studied a novel like Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* discuss the connection between social status, education, and speech and share examples of personal experiences in which they have adapted their language to the situation or have been aware of others' differences in dialect. The class collects and posts examples of effective and ineffective language use from school communications, media, daily bulletins, and even from other classes.

In pairs students develop a role-playing dialogue in order to discover how language affects communication, or a lack of it, between employers and employees, applicants and college admissions officers, students and counselors, or others, using either the characters from the literature or other famous personalities from school or public life. After a given time, students switch roles in the dialogue in order to experience the differences in speaking and listening, given the part they play. In a follow-up report, each student writes a summary evaluation of the candidate seeking the job, admission, or interview, noting the candidate's effective or ineffective response to questions and his or her personality, enthusiasm, and appropriateness for employment or admission.

## Improving Oral and Aural Language Abilities

**Standard 18** Students engage in many activities that enhance and improve their oral and aural language abilities.

Among the problems of the schools identified in the many reports about the state of education today is the amount of time students spend in passive activities, many consigned to oversized classes where instructors deliver lectures and expect attention from students who spend most of their day sitting still, responding to silent seatwork, or reviewing factual information. Research in learning suggests that students must be active and engaged in order to internalize what they encounter. Too often, however, the size of classes or the limited resources of teachers and curriculum prevent students from practicing those skills of listening and speaking that enable them to articulate their ideas, discover their questions, suggest where they are having trouble, and move ahead.

Students need activities that encourage them to formulate questions for themselves and other students on several levels of thought. These questions might range from "What happens?" to "What does it mean?" Other activities might require students to listen and respond to each other rather than only to the teacher, to think before they write, to write before they talk, and to talk before they read. Such activities help students develop the oral and aural skills they need to function effectively, both as students and as contributing adults in society.

*"Through effective English–language arts programs, we must offer students multiple opportunities, formal and informal, to develop their speaking and listening skills because talking and listening are the primary tools by which they will learn from today and the past and communicate with each other."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 11

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 18

Before beginning the study of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* or a comparable vision of the future, such as Karel Capek's play *R.U.R.* or Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles*, students develop in small groups a brief role-playing presentation for the class or a debate designed to provoke their thinking about how their world will be different 25 or 50 years in the future: What inventions will make life easier? How will society be organized? What problems will local and international communities be trying to deal with?

To develop their listening skills, students read as a play chapter four of the text of *Brave New World*, noting how each conversation suggests a different social, political, or behavioral attitude in the futuristic society presented in the book. In a computer debate, where the dialogue created on the computer provides the occasion for reading and responding to their partner's arguments and opinions, students write opinion statements about the quality of life in the "World State," with each partner advancing the other's argument by reading the statement and then asking a question to suggest the opposite point of view. As a summary activity, students divided into debate teams prepare formal debates for the class based on arguments

for and against the way of life Huxley describes in *Brave New World,* using their knowledge of both the text and contemporary life for illustration.

## Teaching Listening Skills

**Standard 19** Listening skills require direct teaching.

*"The art of teaching, then, lies in helping students discover how good listeners, speakers, readers, and writers accomplish their ends in communicating with others . . . [and] good teaching requires adapting the direct teaching of strategies to students' particular needs."*

*English–Language Arts Framework,* p. 16

The rapid changes in the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of today's schoolchildren and in the technology available for educational purposes suggest the increased importance of helping students develop their listening skills by providing direct instruction in how to listen effectively and actively. While their ears are often beset by noise, most students effectively have taught themselves how not to listen actively; in fact, many students depend on the presence of noise before they can "concentrate" on homework assignments. Moreover, the recreational proliferation of computer games, with their capacity to absorb young people's attention for long periods of time, decreases the recreational opportunities other games might provide for social interaction.

Large numbers of students who come to language arts classrooms and activities with limited experiences in English depend heavily on the oral dimensions of language for their successes. Yet, all too often, classroom teachers have presumed that students know how to listen effectively. Activities that allow students to listen for main ideas and examples, to restate what they thought they heard, and to ask questions when they did not hear or understand will sharpen those listening skills that are so necessary to future successes in the academic or work environments that they will encounter.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 19

Following a free-writing activity when students reconstruct a dialogue in which they remember not listening to a parent, a friend, or a teacher, students discuss the obstacles to hearing what another person says. After they have read a play such as Paul Zindel's *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds,* Carson McCullers's *The Member of the Wedding,* or Herb Gardner's *A Thousand Clowns,* students in small groups prepare dramatic readings of specific scenes for presentation to the class.

Members of the class respond to the presentations with brief "coach notes" in which they make comments on delivery and character interpretation. As a final writing activity, students are asked to develop a letter from one of the characters to another, an advertisement for a course in listening taught by one of the characters, or a diary entry. In their writing students should focus on what one learns by listening carefully, how one can misunderstand by not listening, or why one needs to learn to listen carefully.

## Applying Higher-Level Thinking in Detecting Propaganda

**Standard 20** Students apply higher-level thinking such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as they detect propaganda techniques.

Despite the rapidly escalating body of information and almost immediate access to vast quantities of knowledge available as a result of computer technologies, today's students continue to demonstrate difficulties in evaluating information and being able to think their way through vast quantities of information, to make informed judgments, and to form valid opinions. While they are inundated with advertisements or media hype exhorting them to buy designer clothes or the latest rock hits, their confidence in examining details and drawing conclusions for themselves is often limited to the opportunities created in their school curricula. The development of the higher-order thinking skills, of course, is the domain that cuts across the academic disciplines for all students. Classroom activities that enable students to understand and manipulate language in all their studies and, as a result, to function as thinking, literate citizens must help them learn to use all their language skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading in the development of their higher-level thinking skills.

*More important, however, is whether students learn to ask higher-order questions, those demanding that they reflect on inferences, apply understandings to new tasks, explore open-ended issues, analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 15

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 20

As they are introduced to the propagandistic devices most commonly used in advertising or political campaigning, students in groups identified as political parties develop for presentation to the class a political advertising campaign for their candidate for some office. It might be an office for the class, the student body, the community at large, or a party office based on their concurrent reading of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* or *1984*, complete with campaign slogans, logos, video advertising spots, bumper stickers, and campaign speeches presented to the class. As they study the novel, they write bumper stickers or "Newspeak" articles that reflect their ability to detect the propaganda techniques used by the societies in the texts and to develop and explain their own uses of such techniques.

Students collect and share with the class examples of such loaded language from magazines and newspapers. In a final series of debates on topics they generate after their reading of the novel, students demonstrate their ability to develop valid, supporting arguments for a controversial proposition that affects the society at large. Topics for the debates might range from those within the context of their reading to real issues in the community around them.

## Studying Vocabulary in Context

**Standard 21** Students study vocabulary words in context—drawn from literature or other disciplines studied.

*"Though some students may need more help than others in using contextual or textual clues in reading, all students need background information, vocabulary work, and help in working through a text as they move from words to meaning and from understanding a text to discovery and learning its implications for their lives."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 9

By the turn of the twenty-first century, students whose cultural heritage derives from some background other than the Western European traditions that formed the majority culture for more than two centuries will form the new majority in the public schools of California. Perhaps even more importantly, vast numbers of those in the new majority will speak English as a second or third language, many of them hearing and speaking at home a language that is different from the one they hear and speak at school. Yet the rapidly developing technologies, which require an additional set of language skills, and the workplace students will enter after their academic studies are completed demand that they function easily and confidently in English in order to capitalize on the opportunities that the American society offers.

While computers may break down information to bits and bytes, language competence requires the integration of thought and words, words and sentences, sentences and meaning. Classroom activities that enable students of different language backgrounds to share their knowledge of the language as well as their thoughts and opinions about their reading and writing help develop the language fluency that all students must have to function in the society. The integration of vocabulary study with students' reading and writing across the academic disciplines enables them to approach new language tasks with the necessary skills and resources for successful efforts in the workplace and in other academic enterprises.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 21

In preparation for reading a literary work about or from another culture, such as the fictional account of a clash of cultures in John Patrick's play or Vern Sneider's novel *Teahouse of the August Moon* or a contemporary autobiographical work such as Richard Rodriguez's *Hunger of Memory* or a novel like *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, students collect from their reading unusual and interesting words as they encounter the vocabulary in the text. In small groups students develop a brief commercial for a word sale advertisement, using the word, selling its usefulness, and making clear to the buyer the meaning of the word. An alternative class activity might be to develop for competition a "Word Jeopardy" game based on the television show "Jeopardy."

To focus on the importance of words in context, students select for reading to the class a passage from *Teahouse of the August Moon*, where wordplay emphasizes the power of persuasive and convincing use of words and the potential for misunderstandings between people

of different cultures. Or students might select a passage from *Beloved* or *Hunger of Memory*, where understanding the words and inferences of both cultures is important to self-esteem or social success. In a final writing activity, students are asked to find a new word to describe a main character in either work by consulting a thesaurus or by using a computer thesaurus program. They will also be asked to use some of the vocabulary words studied as they develop an essay about the character and the problems created by misunderstanding people whose culture and language are different from one's own.

## Studying Etymology to Increase Vocabulary

**Standard 22** Students study etymology, the roots and histories of words, as a means of acquiring a larger and more precise vocabulary.

As the cultural diversity of students in California's classrooms grows and changes and the volume of information available to students through the widely varied media and technological sources increases, it becomes more important than ever that students learning to use language effectively develop the skills for acquiring and using vocabulary. Moreover, though they may be exposed to the barrage of information available through many sources, students today are not as likely to read widely; thus, they are less likely to absorb vocabulary in context without specific learning opportunities designed to enable them to encounter, tackle, and internalize new words and systems of words. Vocabulary activities can help students get into a new piece of literature by preparing them for new words they will encounter and beyond the literature by helping them see relationships among families of words. Such activities give students the tools they need for attacking new materials and ideas with understanding.

*"Most important to language acquisition is the fundamental principle governing all growth in language: that is, language learners need to understand the meaning of the message."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, p. 22

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 22

Before they begin reading aloud Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*, students in groups of three are asked to present for the class a brief role-playing scene in which two people try to persuade a third, by using different styles of language, that each is better suited to be the third one's friend, sweetheart, tutor, or confidant. As they discuss the scenes after presentation, students identify the quality of language used by each "suitor" and the differences in vocabulary that resulted.

While they are reading the play together, students focus on Cyrano's use of elaborate or romantic or simply eloquent language, trying their own hand, for example, at writing an extended description of some predominant feature of their own, which they describe in several metaphors as Cyrano does his nose. As students collect words

that are new to them, they select one for sharing with the class for its interesting derivation or its connection with several related words, especially those they already use in their own language.

## Teaching Vocabulary as Part of Instruction in Speaking and Writing

**Standard 23** Teaching vocabulary should be part of teaching speech and writing as well as comprehension activities.

Facility with oral language becomes central to learning as students develop their skills of asking questions, exploring meaning, and communicating their ideas both in discussion and in writing. Especially for students who are learning a second or third language, but also for those whose first language is English, a thorough and coherent understanding and use of vocabulary is essential to their learning if they are to become fully functioning members of a democratic society. An integrated language arts program, therefore, provides students with opportunities to experience and use new vocabulary. Only when they have the words to understand and to communicate with others in the society can students make full use of their educational opportunities and contribute to the welfare of the society around them.

*"... all students need background information, vocabulary work, and help in working through a text as they move from words to meaning."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 9

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 23

Students who are reading John Knowles's novel *A Separate Peace* or Robert Bolt's play *A Man for All Seasons* prepare for the class a series of debates on characters and themes in the work. To prepare for the debate, partners, who are paired to mix native and nonnative English speakers, engage in a question-and-answer silent debate by using computers, if available, or by exchanging papers. In either case one student makes a deliberately controversial statement, such as "Finny caused Gene's accident," "Gene is a weak character," "Richard Rich is without principle," or "Thomas More is guilty of treason." The second student responds with a question that states an opposite opinion and requires of the first student a written explanation of the argument. The response also includes a question for the second student to answer along with an explanation of the opposite opinion.

While they prepare their debates for the class, students practice finding vocabulary words that carry strong connotations and opinions, thereby exploring how to persuade others to agree with their position, and they use such words in their debates and written briefs. In their informal evaluation that accounts for who won each debate, class members comment on, among other criteria, the most effective use of vocabulary to persuade the audience of the validity of their argument.

"Schoolwide forums that recognize student achievement and performance in writing or speaking, whether in journals or debates, letters or plays, essays or biographies, promote among students a sense of accomplishment and of the importance of language to the school community."

*English-Language Arts Framework*, pp. 14-15

## Participating in Specialized Courses

**Standard 24** Students participate in specialized courses that integrate their skills and allow them to pursue their own interests.

One of the most visible measures of an effective English–language arts program is an active enrollment in specialized courses and extended curricular activities that emphasize the use of language arts and that enable students to use their language skills beyond their English classes. Students who choose to enroll in courses such as speech, creative writing, or journalism increase their meaningful opportunities to practice higher-level thinking through effective listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 24

Students who are enrolled in a creative writing class read their work in progress to a small editing group of "coaches." After the group discusses appropriate suggestions for more development of character or setting in a short story or for using better imagery or rhythm in a poem, for example, the students revise their work. Over the length of the course, as they read professionally written stories and poems as models, students discuss which piece of each student's writing will be included in an end-of-course magazine, with editing and production decisions made by the class in editorial committees and as a whole.

Before they begin researching a news or feature story, students in a journalism class develop a list of appropriate interview, background, and follow-up questions and practice asking questions and taking notes. They study models of journalistic style such as that used in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, or a local or school newspaper, and they read short pieces by journalists such as Mark Twain, Gordon Parks, E. B. White, and Joan Didion, discussing matters such as style, tone, and purpose of the writer. Students share drafts of their articles with student editors before making revisions for publication in the school newspaper, magazine, and yearbook, or in the local newspaper.

Students enrolled in a student government course prepare a regular column for the school newspaper, highlighting significant activities sponsored by the student council; submit similar articles to the local newspaper; and submit press releases to both the school newspaper and the local newspaper. They also sponsor lunchtime open-forum sessions for discussion or debate about current issues on campus or for informal question-and-answer sessions between students and administrators about issues of importance to the school or the community.

Students who select a speech class discuss in groups and develop as a class a list of controversial local or state issues from which each team will select a subject for a formal debate. Partners share argu-

ments and locate appropriate research references on such topics as requiring a community service project for high school graduation, abolishing the student government in the school, or opening a community-sponsored teen recreation center in an empty school facility. Class members evaluate the argument of each team for persuasiveness and content, and each student selects one subject for writing a guest editorial for the school newspaper.

## Emphasizing New Assessment Methods and Tools

**Standard 25** Assessment methods and tools should be aligned with a new emphasis (1) on substance and actual students' performance; (2) on the integration of writing, comprehension, and speaking; and (3) on contextual acquisition of vocabulary and technical skills.

Assessment of students' progress is a cooperative responsibility involving students, classroom teachers, school-site and district administrators, state specialists, and members of the community. Within the context of daily instruction, many opportunities are available for monitoring students' progress. An effective English–language arts instructional program contains evaluation procedures that focus on comprehension of literary and factual materials, competence in the writing process, interaction of students in small- and large-group discussions, and activities that help students develop good practices in higher-level thinking. The integration and interdependence of all the language arts skills require a wide variety of formal and informal measurements and evaluations of students' achievement and growth.

*"With the revised curriculum in place, assessment of its effectiveness must depend on tests that reflect the purposes of the curriculum. . . . The end of assessment is an understanding whereby students demonstrate a broad in-depth acquaintance with literature; an ability to handle a variety of writing tasks with confidence, ease, and insight; a facility with aural and oral tasks; and a range of thinking skills from summary to analysis and interpretation."*

*English–Language Arts Framework*, pp. 33–34

### Representative Enabling Activities for Standard 25

As they study a core work such as John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* or Marjorie K. Rawlings's *The Yearling*, students experience a range of activities that are designed to provide for formal and informal evaluation of their progress. Individually, students enter questions, passages, and responses to the reading in their reading logs. Small groups of students develop review questions on several levels of comprehension, from factual information to interpretation and from short-answer items to questions that develop their higher-level thinking skills as they negotiate what constitutes a complete answer to a question they will ask other students.

In practice writing prior to their preparation of a draft for an essay, students identify and illustrate the dreams of different characters in the novel. They write brief comments on a partner's paragraph to evaluate the writer's success with citing specific examples after the class has discussed the difference between showing and telling when the details are observed in fiction rather than through experience. A

formal assessment of the students' understanding of the novel and its ideas might consist of the presentation of a formal debate about the wisdom or foolishness of George's final action, a group-developed newspaper on the day following the last scene of the novel, or an essay about the importance of having goals and dreams to improve the quality of life.

Other more general assessment programs, such as districtwide or statewide assessments, are useful as diagnostic tools. However, they do not replace program evaluation at the classroom level. These assessments should be administered in such a way as to minimize interruption in the classroom learning environment and to support, rather than shape, classroom curriculum and programs.

A coherent assessment program focuses on the successful development of multiple language arts skills of all students. It provides information about the students' growth in reading with understanding, writing in a variety of modes, speaking and listening effectively, and thinking about the ideas of great literature, as the students relate to themselves and the world around them.

*"Perhaps no other field of study demands of a teacher so much sensitivity, insight, and creativity as does English–language arts. To promote learning, English–language arts teachers must draw on all the resources available—from their own knowledge of the world and of good teaching to the instructional methods and tools available in today's fast-moving, technologically oriented environment."*

*English-Language Arts Framework*, p. 13

## Fulfilling the Promise in a Democratic Society

Given the tremendous diversity of the elements of language and of the human personality and rate of growth and learning, it is little wonder that the development of English–language arts programs becomes a complex task that demands the creativity and energy of many people, including students and teachers, parents and school board members, and members of county and state agencies. Yet, however challenging the task, the reward is commensurate with the demands, for in language lies the greatest potential for any democratic society. Only when citizens in such societies can articulate and communicate their thoughts and feelings sensitively and effectively can they work collectively for the better life for which all of us hope and dream. Language gives students the power to open doors to a better future.

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